**Accident at exploration sites of ONGC**

2307. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of fire accidents at oil exploration sites of ONGC, both off shore and on shore, during the last three years with the reasons for each;

(b) the details of loss of human lives and property in each of these incidents; and

(c) the steps taken to avoid such fire accidents in the future?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKARAIYAR) (a) The details of major fire incidents at oil exploration sites of ONGC, both off shore and on shore, during the last three years (01.01.2002 to 31.07.2005).

| SI. No. | Date& Fire Duration | Place | Probable cause of incident |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Year 2002 | NIL | NIL |
| | Year 2003 | NIL | NIL |
| | 24.07.2004 (07.10 to 08.30 Hrs) | 'Uran Plant, Mumbai | Naptha from the process plant leaked out of the Plant's boundary wall through a storm channel, where it caught fire. The source could be ignition outside the ONGC boundary. ' The fire was extinguished with the help of the ONGC Fire Gorup. |
| | 16.12.2004 (06.30 to 06.50 Hrs) | NQO Process Platform, Mumbai | Contamination of hot oil with crude oil at the crude oil heater, resulting in the expansion of hot oil which ultimately overflowed through a top up line of the expansion tank. Because of the wind direction, the over-flowing fluid sprayed on to the exhaust duet of TG 4, resulting in fire. The fire was extinguished within 20 minutes by the platform crew. |
| | 31.01.2005 (03.30 to 04.15 Hrs) | Gas Pipeline at Mehsana Asset, Mehsana | After detecting a gas leakage froma pressu-rized line in an open field, depressurization of line was being done. As it was winter, the atmospheric temperature at night was low in the open field leading to the formation of "gas clouds" near ground level in the vicinity of fhe leakage point and in the direction of the * |

| SI. No. | Date & Fire Duration | Place | Probable cause of incident |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | flow of wind. A match stick, beedi or non-flame-proof torch used by the Security guards on duty may have been tire possible cause of the fire. |
| | 27.07.2005 | MHN process Platform, Mumbai | While MSVSamudra Suraksha was on medical evacuation duty near MHN Platform, it apparently lost control and hit the platform. The initial information indicates that the collision resulted in a serious leakage of oil and gas. Fire broke out instantaneously on both the vessel and the platform. The exact cause of the incident is under investigation. |

(b) Details of loss of human lives and property in each of the above fire incidents is as follows:—

| SI. No. | Date & Fire duaration | Place | Loss of human lives | Loss of property |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Year 2002 | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| | Year 2003 | NIL | NIL | NIL |
| 1. | 24.07.2004 (07.10 to 08.30 Hrs) | Uran Plant, Mumbai | 01 | Insignificant |
| 2. | 16.12.2004 (06.30 to 06.55 Hrs) | NQO Process Platform, Mumbai | NIL | Insignificant |
| 3. | 31.01.2005 (03.30 to 04.15 Hrs) | Gas pipeline at Mehsana Asset | 02 | Insignificant |
| 4. | 27.07.2005 (16.05 to 18.00 Hrs) | BHN process Platform, Mumbai | 11 Died & 11 Missing | Under asessment. However, the platform has been destroyed and the vessel has sunk. |

(c) The following steps have been taken by ONGC to avoid such fire incidents in future:

* Investigation of fire incidents by a team of experts and implementation of their recommendations.

- Issue of safty alerts to other ONGC work centres.
- Extensive training on various fire fighting programmes.
- Strict adherence to regular different levels of fire fighting drills at each and every ONGC work center.

**Hike in Price of Gas**

2308. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Group of Ministers in respect of gas price hike has submitted its recommendations; and

(b) by when the Central Government will decide on this matter?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR) (a) and (b) Based on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers (GoM) the Government have revised the price of natural gas with effect from 1.7.2005.

Effective 1.7.2005, the consumer price of gas produced by ONGC and OIL from existing fields given to them on a nomination basis (APM gas) is Rs. 3,200 per thousand cubic meter (MCM) exclusive of royalty, taxes & levies and transmission charges.

The power and fertilizer sectors are critical to the economic development of the country and the output price of these sectors is either controlled for regulated by the Central and State Governments. Therefore, these Governments have to bear the burden of large subsidies in these sectors. Under court orders, commitments have to be made to specific and users. Small scale consumers having allocations upto 0.05 million standard cubic meters per day (MMSCMD) are also given priority in gas supply. Accordingly, it has been decided in the public interest, that all available APM gas would be supplied to only power and fertilizer sector consumers against their existing allocations, in addition to the specific and users committed under Court orders and small-scale consumers having allocations upto 0.05 MMSCMD. However the gas price for transport sector (CNG), Agra Ferozabad small industries, and other small scale consumers, with allocations upto 0.05 MMSCMD, would be progressively increased over the next 3 to 5 years to reflect the-market price.